



John L. Salomone
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR JEFF WRIGHT

MINUTES

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION – SPECIAL MEETING

January 24, 2008

I CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Bafundo called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM in the Helen Nelson Room of the Newington Town Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present (roll call)

Nancy Bafundo, Chair

Tony Boni

Peter Boorman

Robert Briggaman

Alan Nafis

Staff Present

Marian Amodeo – Library Director

III PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Myra Cohen, 42 Jeffrey Lane: Mrs. Cohen stated that someone on the Commission should be keeping a running list of all of the suggestions brought to the Commission to ensure that all suggestions have been addressed prior to submitting the draft report.

Bill Lindberg, 154 Cambria Avenue: Mr. Lindberg commented favorably about the idea of a budget referendum. He remarked that he has waited for the opportunity to vote on Newington's annual budget for many years. Mr. Lindberg stated that the tax payers of Newington have been denied this simple right to determine how one's tax dollars would be spent long enough. He remarked that over the years the Town Council has determined how to best spend our tax dollars with little or no input from the taxpayers. Mr. Lindberg expressed hope that the efforts of Commission will change that, as Newington residents deserve the same rights and considerations as residents of nearby towns who have the ability to vote on their budgets. He stated that it will be difficult for the Town Council to surrender their power over the budget process, but it is the will of the Newington residents, via the last election, that the residents be allowed to determine the spending of tax dollars. Mr. Lindberg referred to comments made by a current member of the Town Council, in which the Councilor stated, "The referendum should not be automatic. It would not be mandatory; it would only be a result of a petition by the voters". Mr. Lindberg stated disagreement with the Councilor's statement, commenting that such statements are an attempt by some Council members to maintain absolute control over the budget process, and thereby once again ignore

Phone: (860) 665-8510 Fax: (860) 665-8507

townmanager@newingtonct.gov

www.newingtonct.gov

the members of the voting public. He commented that the November election was an undeniable statement by the people of the Town for a budget referendum, not a budget petition.

Sheryl Werner, 11 High Ridge Drive: Mrs. Werner stated that having Town email addresses for the Commissioners is a good idea and asked whether any emails sent to the Commission will be read into the public record and entered into the minutes. Mrs. Werner also suggested that the meaning of any abbreviations or technical terms is stated for the benefit of the public when the Commission uses such abbreviations or technical terms. Mrs. Werner also recommended that any proposed Charter revisions be posted on the website for public review about a week prior to the second public hearing.

Domenic Pane, 638 Church Street: Mr. Pane commented that it has been hard to follow what is being said at the meetings due to microphone problems or lack of microphones, and it is sometimes difficult to hear the Commissioners' comments on television when they don't speak directly into the microphone. Mr. Pane commented that the first public hearing was not well advertised, and that the Commission would not be doing the Town justice if it holds only the two public hearings as required by State statute. He stated that additional public hearings should be scheduled. Mr. Pane stated that minutes should be verbatim. Mr. Pane stated that many people are concerned that a zero-increase in Town taxes for many years could be detrimental and many people believe that a six, seven or eight percent increase for many years could also be detrimental. He suggested that a trigger mechanism, using a CPI (Consumer Price Index), be used to determine the need for a referendum. He elaborated that a CPI plus one percent, or other formula, could be used and explained that if the Council does its job properly and the budget falls within the determined range then there will be no need for a referendum, but if the budget goes too low or high concerns can be addressed via referendum. He asked the Commission to look into this method as a possibility.

IV MINUTES

A 1-3-08 Public Hearing

Mr. Boni moved to accept the minutes of the 1-3-08 Public Hearing. Motion seconded by Mr. Briggaman. Motion passed 5-0

B 1-10-08 Special Meeting

Mr. Nafis noted that under article VI, Organizational Procedures, "Mrs. Nafis" should actually read "Mrs. Bafundo". (so noted)

Mr. Briggaman commented that under "Comments By Commissioners" he had made a reference to the previous meeting on January 3, 2008 in that there were comments made by the public that the meeting was not well attended by the public. Mr. Briggaman stated that he had referenced the fact that compared to the attendance at budget meetings over the previous years, the attendance of the January 3, 2008 meeting was actually pretty good, with twelve speakers compared to the two or three speakers who generally attend the budget meetings. Mr. Briggaman stated that while the minutes are not required to be verbatim he would like his comment to be a part of the public record. (So noted, with the explanation that the comment would not have been entered if there was some sort of interruption or noise on the actual tape which prohibited the comment from being understood, with the intent that the speaker not be misrepresented.)

The Commission agreed by consensus that the item under article VI, "Mrs. Nafis" should read "Mrs. Bafundo".

Mr. Briggaman moved to accept the minutes of the 1-10-08 Special Meeting as amended. Motion seconded by Mr. Boni. Motion passed 5-0

V MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED

A Speaker: Rick LeBoriosis, Former Mayor of Enfield and Chair of East Windsor Charter Revision Commission

Ms. Amodeo introduced Mr. LeBoriosis, former Mayor of Enfield, former Chair of the East Windsor Charter Commission, and consultant to a number of towns' charter commissions.

Mr. LeBoriosis introduced himself, stating that he has worked as a consultant to the charter commissions of two communities. He is currently the President of United Metalworking Industries in Enfield. He has served in local government in various capacities over the years, as a Planning and Zoning Commissioner, District Councilor, Councilor, Deputy Mayor, Mayor, member of National League of Small Cities Council, and completed an internship in public administration by working with the Charter Commission of the Town of Berlin. Later he worked for the Center for Social Inquiry at Central Connecticut as a consultant on another community's charter, and he later served as Chair of his community's Charter Commission. As Mayor of Enfield he chaired the Town's Charter Commission.

Mr. LeBoriosis gave an overview of general charter review process:

- Charter revision is likely the most critical citizen function in any community's self-governing process.
- Members of charter revision commissions have tremendous discretion to propose charter revisions which will have lasting effects on their communities.
- Some recommendations may not be the most glamorous, but establishing the structure through which the most democratic and the most effective local government can occur is vital to the sustenance of self-governing.
- Citizens chosen to serve on charter commissions are generally the community's most respected and trusted statesmen.
- The job of a charter commission is to recommend the basic law that defines the organization, powers, functions and essential procedures of municipal government.
- The approach taken by the commission is prescribed only in that it must respond to those items included in the council's charge to the commission, and it must submit its draft report to the council by the date specified in the charge resolution or sixteen months from appointment.
- Two public hearings must be held, in accordance with State statutes.
- The commission must make sure that recommendations are in accordance with State statutes and the Constitution of the State of Connecticut and the United States.
- The manner in which it approaches the review is up to the commission. It may choose to review the document chapter-by-chapter or it may choose to review functional areas such as finance, administrative organization, budget process, etc. A topical approach followed by a chapter-by-chapter review is recommended.
- Mr. LeBoriosis brought a recommended timeline for meeting the statutory obligations of the commission, including the time frame for the commission to report back to the council, the time frame for the council to review the report before either adopting the changes or sending them back to the commission for further review.
- Mr. LeBoriosis brought a copy of the National Civic League's "Model City Charge", seventh edition, which will help the Commission with language, noting that there may be an eighth edition available.
- If it is the Commission's desire for the Charter to be on next November's ballot it will need to complete its work by June at the latest so that the required public hearings can be held by the Commission and the Council and still allow additional time for revisions.
- Summertime is usually not an ideal time to hold public hearings, and if a public hearing is scheduled for September it becomes very difficult to complete the entire process prior to the November ballot.

Question and answer session followed.

Mr. Briggaman asked about the biggest obstacle or challenge that the East Windsor Charter Commission had to overcome. Mr. LeBoriosis replied that the biggest challenge in East Windsor was developing an interest within the community about the issues discussed by the Commission. He stated that Newington

does have a hot topic to discuss which will help to generate public interest. Mr. LeBoriorous advised the Commission not to take any positions on any topics until opinions of the public, elected officials, and members of boards and commissions are heard and until the Commission investigates all of the alternatives available within the various topics. Using an example of the budget referendum, he stated that it is not a question of simply whether or not to hold a referendum, but it is a question of how many, what is the time frame for holding multiple referendums, are the thresholds for the amount of proposed mill rate increase before a referendum is triggered, can the referendum be called for via a petition, and if so, what are the requirements of the petition, etc. All issues must be considered. Mr. LeBoriorous remarked that the Commission wants to develop a document that when finished meets with the approval of the community as a whole as much as possible. He cautioned not to create a document which may meet immediate needs but is controversial to the point that it affects subsequent elections which may cause the entire issue to open again. Mr. LeBoriorous summarized that insuring adequate public involvement and awareness will be the Commission's biggest challenge.

Mr. Boorman commented on the Commission's need to educate itself in terms of mechanics and procedures as well as substance, and in doing so the Commission is looking for resources to come to speak to the Commission. Mr. Boorman stated that the Commission is planning on inviting department heads, members of boards and commissions, elected officials etc, and asked if there are any additional resources that could be helpful in terms of both the procedural and substantive aspects of Charter review. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that the procedural aspects are clearly defined in the State statute. Mr. Boorman clarified that by "procedural" he means in terms of the mechanics of drafting and implementing language. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that the language drafted by the Commission needs to meet two criteria: it needs to be readable to the average citizen and it needs to meet all legal requirements. He stated that the best resource for charter language is to study the language of the charters of area communities with similar issues, and also to utilize the Model City Charter. Mr. LeBoriorous outlined the general procedure and recommendations for drafting language:

- The Commission will create a draft document which incorporates the proposed changes or draft amendments which will then be submitted to the Town Attorney for review. The Town Attorney will review the document from the legal perspective.
- Keep the language simple and as clear as possible, recognizing that it is a legal document.
- When drafting the language keep a broader perspective than simply a legal perspective. Make sure that the Town Manager, people with governmental experience and people with administrative experience review the language.

Mr. Boorman asked whether it would make sense to invite a Town Manager, Town Council member or Mayor from an area town who had similar hot-button issues in regards to their charters to speak to the Charter Commission regarding changes made to these issues and the pros and cons of what has occurred as the issues come to fruition. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that Town Managers throughout the State make themselves available to speak to communities, and are a good resource. He cautioned the Commission to be aware of the schedule and time limitations, because the sixteen months will go by very quickly.

Mr. Boorman inquired about the frequency of the meetings of the previous commissions of which Mr. LeBoriorous has been associated. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that the commissions met every other week at first, with Wethersfield meeting weekly for the last few months and with Windsor meeting once a week for about a month. Mr. LeBoriorous also recommended that the Commission invite speakers to provide written comments prior to the meeting. He also suggested that the Commission invite all boards and commissions and department heads to submit written recommendations to the Commission. He stated that the Town Council's charge to the Commission is very clear, concise and well-written. He noted that the Commission must respond to each charge individually as well as its overall recommendations.

Mr. Boorman asked Mr. LeBoriorous his opinion about submitting an internal report to the Town Council, whether the Council requests such a report or the Commission feels it important to collect the input of the Council at some point. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that once the Commission has collected information from various sources and speakers as well as the opinions of the public a preliminary report on some broad issues and consensus may be helpful, however a detailed preliminary report would be difficult to provide. He cautioned against submitting a report too early, as locking into positions too early makes it difficult to compromise and/or come to a consensus later in the process.

Mr. Boni asked whether Mr. LeBoriorous' former Charter Commissions had experienced problems with the sixteen-month timetable. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that they had, however they were all ultimately successful in meeting the timetable. Mr. Boni asked if there was anything that he would have done differently. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that he would be very aware and very careful about the amount of time the Commission has to do its work once the information gathering stage is complete. He stated that the Commission will need to go through the Charter chapter by chapter twice in order to catch necessary changes that are the result of other changes made earlier in the process.

Mr. Boni asked whether there is such a thing as too much input. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that the Commission will do the best it can with available resources, and it should not limit input. He stated that democracy requires that the Commission reaches out to the community for its input; the Charter is the community's document.

Mr. Nafis asked how much time should be allocated to the chapter-by-chapter review. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that roughly half of the time should be dedicated to the chapter review. He stated that most commissions find it more useful to gather information and meet with all constituent groups first. Mr. Nafis stated that the Commission will continue to gather input for the entire sixteen months, even after the information gathering phase. Mr. LeBoriorous agreed, and added that many boards and commissions will not have significant recommendations; therefore meetings with these groups should be scheduled accordingly to get the most value out of meeting time.

Mr. Boorman asked Mr. LeBoriorous his opinion about the necessity of verbatim minutes. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that while the Commission is required to keep complete records of its meetings, the minutes are generally just reflections of the general sense of the comments, motions made and actions taken. He stated that verbatim minutes are expensive. He stated that it was interesting to read the (nearly) verbatim minutes posted on the website. Mr. Boorman stated that the Commission is happy with the detail level of the current minutes.

Mr. Boorman stated that the Commission's initial budget is \$5,000.00 and asked what the Commission can anticipate with that budget number. Mr. LeBoriorous asked whether the budget includes secretarial services. Mr. Boorman answered in the affirmative and Mr. LeBoriorous replied that the Commission would likely use the entire budget and may need to ask for additional funds. He noted that many towns hire consultants, and that the overall budget needs will depend on the scope of the Charter review, the condition of the current Charter and the direction that the Commission would like to take regarding the Charter.

Mr. Briggaman asked a question about the Commission's charge (note: question not audible on the tape). Mr. LeBoriorous replied that in East Windsor the charge was "to review the charter". He elaborated that there was a commission appointed but there was no resolution accompanying the appointment. He stated that this is not a good way to appoint a charter commission. Mr. LeBoriorous stated that there is a budget referendum in East Windsor which requires a relatively small petition and a three-referendum limit. He stated that he knows of towns that have gone half a year without a budget, which is not a good way to run a municipality.

Mrs. Bafundo asked about the top issues discussed in the Wethersfield charter review. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that in Wethersfield the top issue was budget referendum, which was not included in the Commission's recommendations. The revisions were mainly technical in nature and the revision was passed by the citizens. Mrs. Bafundo asked when the revision took place. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that it took place about three to four years ago. He stated that the top issues of the East Granby review were the adoption of a Chief Administrator and a recommendation of a First Selectman. He stated that the eleven-member Commission was badly divided on the major issues, and that their referendum failed. Mrs. Bafundo asked about Enfield. Mr. LeBoriorous replied that he was involved in the Enfield review as a Councilor and Mayor, and recalled that the Enfield changes were mainly technical in nature and updates in language. The Enfield revisions did pass.

Mr. LeBoriorous thanked the Commission for the opportunity to speak to them. He wished the Commission the best. He remarked that he has always believed that being a member of a Charter Commission is one

of the highest positions that can be held in municipal government, as only those held in high regard in the community are appointed to these commissions. He stated that good things will come out of the Commission's efforts.

B Review/Approve Meeting Schedule

Mrs. Bafundo presented a memorandum containing the following proposed meeting schedule, noting that the dates in October, November and December would need to be discussed:

Proposed Charter Revision Commission Meeting Schedule – 2008 - 2009

All meetings will be held at 6:30pm in the Helen Nelson Room

January 24
February 14 and 28
March 13 and 27
April 10 and 24
May 8 and 22
June 12 and 26
July 10 and 24
August 14 and 28
September 11 and 25
October 9(?) and 23 (October 9 is Yom Kippur)
November 13 (November 27 is a holiday)
December 11 (December 25 is a holiday)

January 8 and 22, 2009
February 12 and 26, 2009
March 12 and 26, 2009

Mr. Briggaman noted that there is one meeting scheduled in November and one meeting scheduled December 2008, and recommended altering the meeting schedule to the first and third Thursdays in both November and December in order to continue with the every-other-week meeting schedule. Mrs. Bafundo suggested that the Commission consider doing the same in October. Mr. Boorman stated that during the holiday season he would not be opposed to just scheduling one meeting for the months of November and December 2008 with the understanding that a special meeting can be added if necessary. He stated that he would be in favor of leaving just one meeting scheduled in November and one in December and adding additional meetings if needed.

Mrs. Bafundo noted that October 9, 2008 is Yom Kippur. Mr. Boorman stated that out of the respect for the holiday he would be in favor of scheduling the meeting another night. Mr. Briggaman stated that he would be in favor of holding two meetings in a row in October, perhaps on the third and fourth Thursdays of the month. Mr. Nafis agreed with Mr. Briggaman.

Mr. Boorman moved to accept the Charter Revision meeting schedule as provided in the memorandum dated January 16, 2008 with the changes as discussed:

- There will be no October 9, 2008 meeting.
- There will be meetings on October 16, 2008 meeting and an October 23, 2008 meeting
- There will be one meeting in November on November 13, 2008
- There will be one meeting in December on December 11, 2008

Motion seconded by Mr. Boni. Motion passed 5-0

Mrs. Bafundo asked Ms. Amodeo to forward the accepted meeting schedule to the Town Clerk.

C Draft Invitation Letter/Schedule of Invitees

Mr. Boorman stated that during the prior meeting he had suggested that the Commission draft a letter for the purpose of inviting the first group of people to attend. He commented that the Commission's first

speaker, Mr. LeBorinous, was an excellent speaker who spoke in terms of great general topics to get the Commission going and confirmed many of his own ideas about the direction of the Commission and also introduced some new ideas. Mr. Boorman stated that the Commission is looking for presenters who can be informative in terms of procedural aspects as well as be open-minded relative to the substantive issues. Mr. Boorman stated that he put together an invitation to the department heads, and asked for comments and suggestions from the Commission. Mr. Boorman read the draft letter as follows:

Charter Revision Commission
Town of Newington
c/o Town Manager's Office
131 Cedar Street
Newington, CT 06111

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL TOWN OF NEWINGTON DEPARTMENT HEADS

Greetings,

Recently, the Newington Town Council made the determination that now is the time to review and update the Newington Town Charter. We, the members of the Charter Revision Commission, sincerely recognize the responsibility of the task assigned to us and look forward to the challenge of updating the document that serves as the touch stone for our municipal government.

Our task requires us to be educated as to the current working effectiveness of the Charter and further to be counseled as to the strengths and the short comings of the document. We value your input as part of that process. We recognize that you and the members of your staff operate under the requirements and otherwise provisions of the Charter and therefore you have valuable insight into the practical application of the Charter on a day to day basis. We are anxious to have your input.

We ask that you contact our staff person, Marian Amodeo at _____ (note: Ms. Amodeo to provide her contact information) to arrange a date to meet with us and share your thoughts and ideas on Charter reform. All of your ideas are welcome. Please take this as an opportunity to help us make sure that we have your input in a process that, if done right, will ultimately benefit all who come in contact with the Town of Newington.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Members of the Newington Charter Revision Commission

Nancy Bafundo, Chairperson
Alan Nafis
Robert Briggamin
Peter J. Boorman
Anthony Boni

The Commission made the following recommendations for amendments to the letter:

- Mrs. Bafundo recommended changing the phrase "short comings" to "opportunities to improve"
- Mr. Boni asked for his first name to read "Tony" rather than "Anthony"
- Mr. Briggaman corrected the spelling of his last name from "Briggamin" to "Briggaman"
- Mr. Briggaman requested that his middle initial "E" be included in his name
- Mr. Nafis requested that his middle initial "L" be included in his name
- Mrs. Bafundo requested that her middle initial "L" be included in her name
- Mr. Briggaman recommended that specific language be added to request that the invitees include information about how their department operates and what the department's function and purpose is within the Town. Mr. Boorman replied that something along those lines can be added, however, every department head is already referenced in the current Charter. Mr. Briggaman replied that while they are referenced in the Charter, the Commission might receive better, more explicit information for each department's function and operation. Mr. Boni commented that the

Commission will have the ability to ask those types of questions to the speakers during the presentation. Mr. Briggaman replied that by adding the language to the letter the speakers can prepare ahead of time. Mr. Boni replied that they should be prepared if they are running a department. Mr. Boorman asked for the Commission's approval to add language to the letter to reflect Mr. Briggaman's sentiments. The Commissioners agreed. Mr. Nafis commented that department heads can contact Ms. Amodeo if they have any questions regarding the Commission's expectations.

Mr. Boorman stated that he'd like to amend the letter according to the discussion and then consult with Ms. Amodeo and other staff to make sure that the letter is appropriate and gets out to the appropriate people. He stated that it would be a simple task to finish. Mrs. Bafundo agreed and asked for a motion.

Mr. Briggaman moved to accept the letter with the discussed amendments, and to have Mr. Boorman make the amendments to the letter and consult with Ms. Amodeo and appropriate staff about distribution. Motion seconded by Mr. Boni.

Motion passed 5-0

Ms. Amodeo distributed three documents to the Commission:

1. The 1990 Charter revision timetable
2. A list of Town departments
3. A partial list of other resources available to the Commission

Mr. Boorman asked whether the 1990 Charter revision timetable was a schedule determined in advance or was it the dates that the items actually happened. Ms. Amodeo replied that it was the dates that the items actually happened.

Mr. Boni asked whether there should be a time limit set for each department head to speak. Mr. Boorman replied that he would be opposed to a time limit, as some department heads will have much more to speak about than others and any time-related issues can be addressed as they occur. Mr. Boorman stated that he wants speakers to be comfortable and feel that they can express their opinions and expertise.

Mrs. Bafundo commented that many of the various boards and commissions will have valuable input within their departments in respect specifically to the Charter, and it would be a good idea to dovetail the appropriate boards and commissions with the departmental presentations. Mr. Nafis agreed that it is a good idea, as it will give the Commission a broader idea of what is going on in that group. Ms. Amodeo asked whether the invitation letter should be rephrased to send as an invitation to boards and commissions as well. The Commission agreed. Mr. Boorman stated that it makes sense to bring in the people who do the day-to-day work along with the policy makers. Mrs. Bafundo stated that she likes the groupings of the Town department list. Ms. Amodeo stated that it may take longer to go through the list when boards and commissions are included. Mrs. Bafundo commented that while the order may change it is a good starting place.

Mr. Nafis noted that the 1990 Commission brought in the Board of Education and the Town Council, and asked whether it would be worthwhile to do the same. Mr. Boorman replied that he would like to hear from the Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education, especially in respect to hot button issues. He also stated that he did not see any reason not to include the Town Council as well.

Mr. Boorman commented that the schedule of invitees is now a work in progress, and Ms. Amodeo can report any further progress or ideas at the next meeting. Mrs. Bafundo stated that she believes that the Commission is open to scheduling speakers as they are available. Ms. Amodeo asked whether the speakers should be scheduled starting on the fourth week of February. Mrs. Bafundo answered in the affirmative.

Ms. Amodeo stated that the list of resources is still a work in progress. Mr. Boorman suggested that the Commission study area towns' charters which contain issues such as the referendum issue. He asked

Ms. Amodeo and legal counsel to coordinate gathering such charters for Commission review. Mr. Boorman also suggested that the Commission reach out to Town Managers and Mayors from those towns to hear their experiences, especially individuals who were present during that town's charter revision and understand the results and consequences of the revisions. Mrs. Bafundo agreed with the idea and stated that there is no reason to wait. Mr. Nafis commented that Mr. LeBorion had mentioned that many Town Managers are willing to speak to charter commissions. Mr. Briggaman stated that he has copies of Naugatuck's charter which he will pass along to the Commission. Mr. Boorman recommended that as individual Commissioners gather information they should give it to Ms. Amodeo to help her compile resources.

Mrs. Bafundo reiterated the request to gather area towns' charter information and charter review processes.

Mr. Boorman mentioned the model charters provided by the speakers. Ms. Amodeo replied that she just received the information that evening and did not have copies. She also stated that she can look into obtaining the latest edition of the document for the Commission.

D Draft Brochure

Mrs. Bafundo introduced a draft of the Commission's informational brochure.

Ms. Amodeo reviewed the brochure, which includes the following information:

- Background information on the Town Charter
- Names of Commissioners
- Charge to the Commission
- Meeting dates (which will be revised based on the schedule discussion)
- Public hearings and invitations for public participation at each meeting
- Commissioners' contact information: individual email address, Town fax number, Town phone number, and address for written communication.

Mrs. Bafundo stated that once the brochure is finalized it will be made available online and at the Library, Town Hall, Senior Center and any other location that is willing to post the brochures. She referenced an earlier comment by a member of the public who suggested reading emails into the public record, stating that the Commission will do so as much as possible and if it becomes a problem then they will find another avenue to do so. Mrs. Bafundo noted that the phone number on the brochure is the Town Manager's phone number.

The Commissioners made recommendations for amendments to the brochure:

- Mr. Briggaman noted a grammatical error, on the last page "...members of other boards and commission..." should read "...members of other boards and commissions..."
- Mr. Briggaman suggested that the dates of the charge be included on the cover so that a reader will know that it is a current document.
- Mr. Briggaman suggested adding the Newington seal to the Cover
- Mrs. Bafundo suggested adding clip art picture of a woman to the front cover. (The brochure currently contains a clip art picture of a man.)

Mr. Boorman commented that to control cost the final brochure can be produced and printed using one of the office computers and printers. Mrs. Bafundo stated that the brochure can be printed on plain paper to save cost.

Mr. Boorman noted a section of the brochure under the Public Hearings section, which reads, "Once the Council adopts the Final Report, the proposed Charter revisions will be submitted to a referendum for a vote by the public." Mr. Boorman noted that it is the electors, not members of the public, who will vote on the revisions. He noted that if a resident is not a registered voter they will not have the opportunity to vote on the revisions. Mrs. Bafundo suggested changing the wording to "the Newington voters".

Mr. Nafis confirmed that the intention is to print and fold the brochures and make them accessible to the public. Mr. Boorman suggested that a copy of the brochure be sent along with the invitational letters to

the department heads and board members. Mr. Nafis asked whether there is a no-cost way to mail brochures to Town residents, by perhaps including them in an existing mailing. Mr. Briggaman suggested utilizing the Newington Life publication, noting that the Parks and Recreations brochures are included in the publication. Ms. Amodeo replied that the Parks and Recreations Department pays for that service.

Mrs. Bafundo suggested displaying the information contained in the packet on the Channel 14 scroller.

The Commission agreed by consensus to approve of the brochure with the discussed amendments.

VI ANY OTHER BUSINESS PERTINENT TO THIS COMMISSION

Mr. Boorman suggested that the Commission send a charge to the Town Attorney to review the entire Charter and to recommend changes to language needed to bring the Charter to compliance according to Connecticut General Statutes. Mr. Boorman stated that it would be a good place to start in regards to drafting changes to the Charter language. He stated that the Town Attorney should use the Charter format and set up a separate document so that the Commission can review changes in parallel to the current document. Mr. Boorman stated that there would not be a timetable for the Town Attorney to report back to the Commission, rather the Attorney may report back to the Commission as he proceeds. Town Attorney Ben Ancona was in attendance of the meeting and agreed to the charge. Mr. Briggaman suggested using a red-line format during the editing process as the document is in Word format.

VII COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS – (see below)

VIII PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Maddie Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive: Ms. Kenny agreed with the idea of reviewing the charters of area towns that have added referendums to their charters. She requested to see examples of towns that considered and rejected referendums in their charters. She expressed concern that the Charter review will become a one-issue review of the referendum only and advised the Commission to carefully consider the entire Charter, as the actions of the Commission will have many ramifications.

Mr. Boorman inquired as to whether it makes sense to amend the meeting agendas to move the “comments by commissioners” portion of the agenda to after public participation so that the Commissioners will have a chance to respond to public comments. Mrs. Bafundo agreed, and agreed to move the “Comments by Commissioners” portion of the agenda to after the “Public Participation” portion of the agenda. Mr. Briggaman agreed, noting examples of speaking during public participation at Town Council meetings and wondering whether the Council really heard what he was saying.

Domenic Pane, 638 Church Street: Mr. Pane requested that extra copies of any literature handed out during Charter meetings be made available to the public in attendance whenever possible. He also asked that such literature also be posted online whenever possible.

Mr. Boorman asked whether the Commission has access to a copy machine. Ms. Amodeo replied that the copiers are all locked up at meeting time, but she can look into making provisions to have one available.

IX ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Boni moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:03pm. Motion seconded by Mr. Nafis.
Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mrs. Jaime Trevethan
Clerk – Charter Revision Commission